

SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE ACADEMIES TRUST (SLAT)

Trips and Visits Policy

Aspire - Challenge – Achieve

Author	SLT Line Link	Date Approved
Chief Operating Officer	Chief Executive Officer	January 2024
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Trust Wide	January 2025	Trust Board of Directors

1.0 POLICY OVERVIEW

An educational trip or visit has enormous potential for enriching the Trust curriculum and, in some cases, it is an essential requirement of examination courses. Thousands of students go on Trust trips and visits every year, the vast majority safely and without incident. It is therefore very important that all trips and visits are properly planned and organised and that all staff involved with Trust trips and visits take all reasonable steps to ensure that risks are minimised. This policy has been written with in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive 'Trust trips and outdoor learning activities', June 2011 and the Department for Education 'Health and Safety on school trips 2018'. Essentially this new document summarises the existing health and safety law relevant to the Trust and how it affects governing bodies, head teachers and other staff.

2.0 DEFINITION

South Lincolnshire Academies Trust define a trip or visit as any occasion when a student or group of students are away from a Trust site participating in an event or activity organised by the Trust.

The word 'Trip' will be used throughout this policy to describe trips, visits or events to avoid repetition.

Key areas identified by the authorities:

- children should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely, not stop them;
- it is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life;
- common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity;
- staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and the children safe and manage risks effectively, they should also hold some level of experience in assisting the running of a school trip before becoming a Trip Leader.

There is no longer any requirement by law for Trusts to have an Educational Visits Coordinator. However, the Trust has a dedicated Trips and Visits Manager who works directly with the Chief Operating Officer. They can give advice about all aspects of Trust trips and visits. They have copies of relevant documentation including guidance issued by the Department for Education and Health and Safety Executive. Staff are instructed to consult with the Trips and Visits Manager prior to planning a trip.

The Chief Operating Officer and the Trips & Visits Manager **must** be notified of all occasions when a student or group of students leave the Trust premises, either accompanied by members of staff or to meet members of staff at a pre-arranged location. This forms a key part of the duty of care we owe to students. It is not easy to give a definitive list of such trips but examples include trips to museums, galleries and theatres, trips to educational conferences, residential trips such as skiing holidays, and all sports fixtures and sports tours. If staff are in doubt about the nature of a trip or visit then they should seek the advice of the Trips and Visits Manager.

All staff must complete a number of forms including the Permission to Plan Form and appropriate Risk Assessments forms before they take a trip.

Staff must not commit to the spending of money until formal approval is given.

3.0 PLANNING AND PREPARATIONS

It is essential to the operational running of the Trust that all trips are planned appropriately throughout the academic year.

Departments are strongly encouraged to plan their pattern of trips and visits for the coming academic year as early as they can. This allows clashes to be kept to a minimum. Trips and visits planned well in advance must be included in the termly Trust calendar but inclusion in the calendar does not guarantee a trip can take place. Events listed in the Trust calendar take priority over non-calendared events. The earlier a trip is planned, the more likely it is to be approved. If two events occur at the same time then the Chief Operating Officer and Head of School will resolve the matter.

Impact on classroom time must be minimal. While it is often easy to justify a trip from the benefit of a trip, other subjects need to be considered. There will be times when it is impossible to avoid taking students out during lesson time, but full consideration must be made of alternative times before making such a decision.

Staff organising a trip must consult as widely as possible with colleagues who might be affected and think carefully about the possible impact of a trip. For example, as far as possible, residential trips should take place during Trust holidays to avoid a loss of teaching time.

The Trust are unlikely to authorise trips for Year 11 students unless it is essential to their studies, this is to keep their time outside the classroom unnecessarily to a minimum.

A Permission to Plan form along with a finance form will be submitted at this stage.

A trip must be authorised by the Cover Manager & Head of School. Once this authorisation is obtained the Chief Operating Officer will review all Trips and Visits before authorising the trip to go ahead.

4.0 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

All pupils at the Trust should be encouraged to go on Trust trips.

The following must be considered:

- Can the activity/visit be adapted to enable them to participate at a suitable level?
- Will additional supervision be necessary?
- The SLATrust SENCO should look at the logistics of trips, at additional resources required and whether students will be disadvantaged by the running of the trip.

5.0 COMMUNICATION

It is essential that all people concerned with the trip are fully informed at appropriate times. Once the planning has been completed and the trip has been approved, the full details of the trip must be prepared. These details, together with copies of letters for parents, must be submitted to the Trips and Visits Manager before being sent out. The financial form needs to be completed and approved before the parents/carers are asked to contribute any money. Overseas trips will need to be discussed with the Trips and Visits Manager to create a payment plan. The trip leader will be notified when the letter is approved for emailing out via ParentMail.

Parents will be informed in writing about all trips.

For day trips requiring payment, this will normally be a minimum of 6 weeks before the trip and for residential trips which will be more expensive it will be normally be 12 weeks before the trip. Trips deemed to be abnormal in regular cost should be set up at least 1 academic year in advance.

If a trip involves overnight accommodation, parents must be given full details of the type of accommodation provided. They must be fully informed as to the nature of the trip, with a clear indication if the students may be unaccompanied while away with the Trust. Parents must acknowledge that their child is fit enough to go on the trip, outline any health problems and authorise the leader of the party to act on their behalf in an emergency. They must also provide a contact number for the duration of the trip.

Longer trips, particularly those overseas, will hold a Parents' Information Evening a few weeks before departure. This allows information to be shared, questions to be asked and answered, and reassurance to be given where appropriate. Information regarding the trip will be printed in the form of a booklet for parents to take away with them.

6.0 INFORMING THE TRUST

The Trust must also know all the relevant details for a trip. The Trust Permission to Plan Form must be completed in full and given to the Trips and Visits Manager, well in advance of the departure date, for day trips this should be at least six weeks before the trip departs. residential trips where possible should be handed in at least twelve weeks prior to departure so that any concerns or problems that may arise can be sorted out. The finance form needs to be completed at the same time. After permission has been given the Trips and Visits procedure needs to be followed. The trip leader must ensure that they are in possession of all parental consent forms and all contact number details throughout the trip, this will be in the form of a Parent Mail Spreadsheet. This information needs to be passed to the Home Contacts.

7.0 COSTINGS

Staff must think carefully about the cost of a Trust trip. Some parents have financial constraints and it must not be assumed that all parents can simply pay. Costs should be kept to a minimum and parents must be given the chance to decline a trip on financial grounds.

Where the parent of a student is in receipt of Free School Meals if any discount to be applied it will be decided by the Pupil Premium Lead prior to any trip being authorised.

The Trust Board of Directors may remit charges in full or in part to other parents after considering other specific hardship cases. The Board of Directors invites parents to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. The Chief Executive Officer will authorise remission in consultation with the Trust Board of Directors.

Money left over at the end of the trip cannot be carried forward to the next financial year or to a future trip. Any balance will be actioned in accordance with the SLAT Finance Handbook.

Parents must be made aware that by signing to give permission for their child to go on a trip and by paying the deposit they are signing to say they are liable for any cost incurred by the Trust even if the Child is unable to go on the trip. If the absence is due to a medical condition or accident an insurance claim will be made to try and recover any money paid above the deposit. Parents confirm their acknowledgement of this using the SLAT Trips & Visits Contract.

8.0 MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If a student has an existing medical condition at the time of booking the trip the school has to be informed of the condition as a matter of urgency. Failure to inform the school of medical conditions may result in the student being unable to go on the trip and money will not be refunded or a child been required to be picked up from a trip at the parent's expense.

9.0 SUPERVISION

There are no exact ratios for Trust trips. The trip leader must ensure that the staffing for a trip is 'reasonable'. This will depend on the age, gender mix, ability and behaviour of the students involved. It will depend on the type of activity undertaken, the nature of the journey and the type of accommodation if the trip is overnight. The competence of the adults supervising a trip must also be considered, together with the need for first aid cover.

South Lincolnshire Academies Trust operate the staffing ratios below, the Chief Executive Officer & Chief Operating Officer may alter these ratios at their discretion.

Day Visits: 2:30 and 1:15 thereafter.

Abroad Trips: 2:15 and 1:8 thereafter. 3 Staff Minimum

Adults that are one to one with a student are not to be included. A member of staff includes appropriate TAs and support staff as agreed with the Chief Operating Officer and Head of School. All adults on a trip need to be DBS checked.

10.0 RISK ASSESSING

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

It is not a legal requirement to complete a risk assessment for every activity or trip. Some activities such as mountaineering, canoeing and sailing, involve higher levels of risk. In these cases, an assessment of significant risks should be carried out. The Trust must ensure that the person assessing the risk understands the risks and is familiar with the activity planned. Trust employers should take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities from taking place.

While every trip will have its own particular risks that must be assessed using the forms provided, research has shown that the following are the most commonly found dangers, so are worthy of particular consideration when doing a risk assessment for any trip away from Trust.

For trips that will involve outdoor or adventurous activities or indeed residential trips, staff are reminded to request copies of risk assessments from the service provider well in advance of the trip and to refer to these in their own risk assessments.

11.0 TRANSPORT

The Trust acknowledges that there are various methods of approved transport for Trips and Visits. These can include:

- Coaches
- Minibus Hire
- Minibus Use (Trust owned)
- Walking
- Pre-arranged Travel Agreements

Trips Leaders will adhere to the Trusts Financial Handbook before proceeding or agreeing to any forms of transport.

If the situation arises where staff may need to use their own car to transport students, this is only to be done with the expressed authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer.

12.0 PRE-VISITS

If possible, an exploratory visit should be made by a teacher before any trip is undertaken. A key factor in reducing risk is knowledge of the place to be visited. Whilst such visits may not always be practical, staff should make every effort to consider such an undertaking.

A member of staff who is to lead a group abroad, on a residential visit or on an outdoor activity should make a special effort to carry out a reconnaissance visit. If this is not possible then a minimum measure would be to obtain specific information by letter from the venue and from reputable organisations who can provide such information.

It is important to remember that places such as outdoor pursuits centres, leisure centres, museums, theatres, etc., have to carry out their own risk assessments for the facilities they provide. If copies of these are obtained by members of staff then this will reduce the burden of the risk assessment process.

13.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The following list is not exhaustive, but it tries to summarise what needs to be done during the planning and organisation of a trip. The list also gives further ideas about areas for risk assessment.

- Facilities/equipment the group will need to take
- Facilities/equipment provided at the venue
- Staff training needs
- Transport arrangements, including meeting arrangements for trips which leave before the start of morning Trust and collection arrangements for trips which return after the end of normal Trust
- Communication arrangements
- Supervision ratio
- Contingency plans for enforced changes of plans or late return
- Information to parents
- Information to Trust
- Preparing students
- Arrangements for sending students home early
- Emergency arrangements

14.0 Emergency Procedures

Teachers in charge of students have a duty of care to make sure that the students are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a Trust visit. If an emergency happens the priorities are to:

Assess the situation

- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and the Trust

Guidance on Emergency Procedures

A copy of the following guidelines must be taken by all party leaders and their deputies.

- Establish nature and extent of the emergency.
- Make sure that all other members of the party are accounted for and safe.
- If there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid (if you have been trained or feel capable – but be aware of consequences that might follow were you to give incorrect treatment).
- Establish names of the injured and call relevant emergency services.
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital.
- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for.
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Executive Headteacher or Operations Director. Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far).
- Telephone numbers for future communication identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed).
- The Trust will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents the Trusts Business Continuity Plan will be followed.
 - Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated.

Additional Procedures for Visits Overseas

Prior to the visit the tour leader should obtain and take with them:

- Passports (where appropriate), some of our students do not have British passports and arrangements need to be clarified early on with Parents
- European Health Insurance Card/UK Global Health Insurance Card (where appropriate) and significant medical histories.
- Details of insurance arrangements and the company's telephone number.
- Location of local hospital/medical services.

In the case of an emergency the framework outlined above should operate

After the Trip

The trip leader must inform the Head of School (or whoever has been delegated as the Trust contact) that the party has returned safely and ensure that all the students are safely collected by a responsible adult, such as a parent or guardian.

If any difficulties or incidents occur on a Trust trip, the EVC must be informed as soon as possible after the trip returns to Trust so that appropriate follow up action can be taken quickly

Additional Guidelines

6th Form Trips – Making own way to and from venue

Staff organising trips for 6th Form who make their own way to and/or from a venue must state this fact to parents in writing stating that pupils will not be supervised when they are travelling. Parents need to accept responsibility for the pupils at this time by signing correspondence to that effect. At no point should a member of staff suggest on 6th Form student take another.

15.0 Trip Approval

All trips will be approved by the Chief Operating Officer or their nominated representative via the signing of the 'Permission to Plan Form, e.g Head of School.

Trips abroad will be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and reported to the Trust Board of Directors annually.